

ARE WE A NATION OF SLACKERS?

*An Editorial from the February Metropolitan Magazine
Written for Rep. Garner of Texas, Other Pork-poachers
in Congress and a Conscience-dulled American Citizenry*

A SUFFICIENT army and an all powerful navy are only the beginnings of preparedness. Far more important than either is the moral stamina of the people and the people's representatives. Without a great moral upheaval in this country all the army and navy schemes which experts can possibly devise are bound to end in futility. Read this extract from a speech by Representative Garner, of Texas:

There are a half dozen places in my district where Federal buildings are being erected or have recently been constructed at a cost to the Government far in excess of the actual needs of the communities where they are located. Take Uvalde, my home town, for instance. We are putting up a post-office down there at a cost of \$60,000, when a \$5,000 building would be entirely adequate for our needs. This is mighty bad business for Uncle Sam, and I'll admit it; but the other fellows in Congress have been doing it for a long time and I can't make them quit. Now we Democrats are in charge of the House and I'll tell you right now, every time one of these Yankees gets a ham I'm going to do my best to get a hog.

IF Mr. Garner really thinks and acts according to the ethics set forth in this speech, the people of Texas ought to take him out and shoot him; or rather they should hang him to the most convenient tree. Shooting is too honorable a death for this kind of traitor. **A MAN WHO WILL STEAL THE MONEY OF HIS COUNTRY WHICH HE HAS BEEN CHOSEN TO GOVERN AND DEFEND WILL SURELY BALK AT NO CRIME.** Such a traitor would embezzle the funds of an orphan ward, sell a sister's honor, desecrate a parent's tomb. We should like to think that Mr. Garner's country fair speech was only a joke in bad taste. Unfortunately we know that what he says is precisely true; and the sentiments he utters are echoed (perhaps in less brazen language) by more than half of our national Congress. If it were not so the annual swindle aptly nicknamed the pork barrel could not be perpetrated.

Mr. Garner, of Texas, is only one of the many traitors at Washington who are willing by pilfering to destroy our national honor and security. It is high time that we stopped mincing words about these elect of the people. **WHEN WE CALL THEM TRAITORS WE USE THE WORD ADVISEDLY.** They are men who merit a disgraceful death. With such men in Congress all the army and navy bills in the world will give us no security. The money voted for the army will be squandered on useless buildings and unearned salaries. The money voted for the navy will go to buy unseaworthy submarines or shoddy armor plate. Remember that this is what actually happens now. It will go on happening until we purge ourselves of the national disease of graft and rid our public places of thieves and traitors.

WE have not forgotten that Mr. Garner's audience, when he made the speech from which we have quoted, omitted to denounce him then and there as a scoundrel. What they undoubtedly did was to laugh heartily at the pleasantry.

For years we have been in a state of almost complete moral atrophy. There is no political wickedness which we do not condone. Graft has long ceased to be regarded with horror. A sudden dramatic crime rouses our interest for a moment; but we have no steadfastness in demanding punishment. Our citizens are murdered in Mexico and on the high seas and we resent only the first theatrical coup. The *Lusitania* was quickly forgotten. But our callousness began long before the war. Women and children were murdered in our own state of Colorado and we have never brought the culprits to judgment. We never shall bring them to judgment. When we submit at home to the worst injustice and to the killing of innocents, is it wonderful that we meet the crimes of the Germans with nothing but words?

IT is not that we altogether lack vision. What we most sadly need is the constancy of purpose that alone can turn a vision into reality. Some years ago an insurgent movement grew up in the West. It spread even into the conservative strongholds of the East. Men looked upon our world of industrialism and finance and saw that it was not good. They saw that a few greedy individuals were exploiting the many and enslaving large sections of the people. The movement grew in Congress and it achieved several excellent pieces of legislation. It broke loose in the conventions of 1912 and a new party was formed waving the flag of Social Justice. Without organization but with the leadership of Mr. Roosevelt the party made an astonishing campaign. No third party movement has ever before shown such amazing strength at the first trial. Yet where is the Party of Social Justice to-day? There is hardly a vestige left. Perhaps the Progressives flatter themselves that they still hold a balance of power, they can still dictate a candidate and possibly a platform at the Republican Convention. **THEY CAN DO NOTHING OF THE SORT.** Mr. Roosevelt can. But that is due entirely to his own individual strength of purpose and foresight. Without Roosevelt the Progressive Party has no national coherence, practically no existence for any useful purpose. That magnificent army of four and a half million voters disintegrated into a rabble at the first defeat. The Progressives had a vision but they had no stamina, no determination to see the thing through. As a nation it is what we least possess. We can hardly even understand it in others.

When the present war broke out it was freely predicted that the belligerents could not stand the strain for a year. Then we said they would never go into a second winter. We simply could not understand the point of view of nations that would wear out every resource of men and money, risk existence itself, **AND ENDURE TO THE END.** That we should so endure if our turn came, we hope and pray. But it will require some terrific blow to give us a new sense of realities without which we cannot be steadfast. For how is it possible to develop moral character in the pursuit of purely material welfare?

UNFORTUNATELY for this nation our time of trial is not yet. So far Mr. Wilson has kept us out of the European conflict. If we got into it we should be in no danger, and would hardly be called on to make any real sacrifice. The

war is making us richer and as we get richer the idea of social justice vanishes farther and farther into the background. That splendid insurgent movement is dead. The reactionaries, quick to see the trend of affairs, are now calling for more efficiency. We may be sure that with the reactionaries efficiency means more power to drill the armies of labor to do their bidding. **WE TOO ARE FOR EFFICIENCY.**

We hope to tell our readers something about efficiency in the next twelve months. In our very next issue Mr. William Hard will explain a good deal of the meaning of German efficiency. **WE NEED SOMETHING OF THAT GERMAN SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION AND PATRIOTISM.** But we want to be quite clearly understood in the beginning. Some of our German friends hailed the idea of the Hard series as a tribute to the German idea. Having failed to establish the singleness of Germany's purpose in invading Belgium the German propagandists are now busy preaching the gospel of German *Kultur*, with the view, doubtless, that if we accept German civilization as the best form of civilization on earth we shall ultimately justify Germany's attack on the peace of Europe.

Let us make it quite clear, therefore, that we regard Germany's forcing of this war on Europe as the most loathsome crime of history, and if we imagined for a moment that to imitate in any degree Germany's efficiency would encourage us to commit similar crimes, we would much rather remain inefficient. But efficiency and crime do not necessarily go together. Neither do efficiency and slavery. The first essential of efficiency is that every one should do his part for the good of the commonwealth and that every one should receive a just reward. Efficiency does not mean (as some of our capitalists believe) the more effective drilling of an army of wage-earners with the object of obtaining greater profits for the small group of capitalists. Efficiency does not stop at giving the workman good wages. There will never be social justice or real efficiency in this or any other country until the workman shares the profits of the industry, and enjoys some of the amenities as well as the necessities of life. With some of our people efficiency seems to mean the ability to turn out so many shells a day with so much profit to the shell-maker.

EXPERIENCE SHOWS US THAT IT IS UNSAFE TO LET ANY GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS MAKE LARGE PROFITS OUT OF MUNITION WORKS. Government ownership of munition works is only impossible now because our Congress, being composed largely of Garners, is unfit to create adequate munition factories; and we believe in safety first in this regard. But unquestionably the time will come when the Government must control all supplies of arms and ammunition. It comes to that in war anyhow; so we may as well prepare for it in time of peace. And if it is wrong for a few individuals to get huge profits out of manufacturing shells, why is it not equally wrong for a few people to get huge profits out of the manufacture of oil or steel? Be sure, therefore, that a more perfect drilling of the capitalist machine is not what we mean by efficiency; but rather a gradual making over of the capitalist machine so that the distribution of rewards and profits is more equitable for all the workers.

The above editorial is reprinted from the February Metropolitan, "The Livest Magazine in America." The Metropolitan to its 400,000 buyers is

More Than a Magazine

It is the forum and inspiration of *intelligent* progressivism. Three years ago the Metropolitan blazed the way for the new *large page* size magazine. It was then a magazine of 150,000 circulation—a good magazine as magazines go. *In three years it has grown to over 450,000 circulation* with the strength that comes to a magazine with editorial vision.

The Metropolitan to-day is as different from other magazines in *editorial* appeal as it was three years ago in *physical* appeal. Other magazines have copied its format, but no other magazine—not one—has been able to successfully imitate its editorial virility.

The one man who stands out as a real leader in this country is **THEODORE ROOSEVELT**. Even his enemies cannot deny that he almost alone has changed the heart and brains of America in an incredibly short space of time. A year ago the President, the Cabinet, Congress and the country were against preparedness of any sort. Theodore Roosevelt courting unpopularity of the most violent kind has led America to the verge of a great change and a new sort of patriotism. He has done it mainly through the pages of the Metropolitan.

HENRY REUTERDAHL is telling us the truth about the Army and the Navy in the Metropolitan, and he is backed by the Army and the Navy in doing it. He is not writing hack magazine articles but supplying the public with the newest and most accurate information. **WILLIAM HARD** in the Metropolitan is bringing out the facts about German efficiency which we are all anxious to imitate but which very few of us understand. Industrial preparedness is made intelligible to the man in the street by one of the very few writers who can render such subjects both intelligible and entertaining.

The time has come for men and women who love America to rally to the magazine that has through a period of hostility and indifference fought the good fight. We want the patriotic people to take the trouble not merely to buy the magazine on the newsstand but to subscribe to it and read it regularly and so help us to keep up the fight with the fullest vigor. We don't want slackers or pacifists. We have no pacifists in our make up.

BOOTH TARKINGTON, RICHARD HARDING DAVIS, FANNIE HURST, RUPERT HUGHES, LOUISE DUTTON, LEROY SCOTT, RING LARDNER, HARVEY O'HIGGINS, LARRY EVANS, JOHN REED, BOARDMAN ROBINSON, CLARENCE DAY, ART YOUNG, are the people who are making our fiction, articles and drawings. They are sturdy Americans, not a pacifist among them unless it is Art Young, and he is not really a pacifist but a humorist and the most human of philosophers. These are the people you will find in the Metropolitan.

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